

Study for the Month of November, 2008

BIBLICAL PERFECTION

Part VI

By Nathaniel Fajardo

Preparing for the Latter Rain

Important note: While this first part of this month's study is obviously not the full study on preparing for the latter rain itself, it nevertheless reveals in a concise yet compact way the nature of the preparation involved which has everything to do with character perfection.

Like the 120 disciples who had characters prepared to receive the promised Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit, also called "the former rain," at the beginning of the gospel dispensation (Acts 1: 11-14; 2: 1-4), those who are seeking for character perfection in these last days are those who are similarly preparing themselves to be "vessels unto honor" to receive the latter rain—*when it is poured out without measure* in the days ahead. But they also understand in a progressive sense that "the latter rain is coming with ten times the power of the midnight cry of 1844" (Spalding-Magan Collection, p. 4). And since these are the very last message and work that God will do for mankind just before probation closes, the preparation is likewise ten times greater, following the principles "unto whom much is given much is required."

No time-setting absolutely

Why are we even considering this topic in our study of Biblical perfection? Because error never sanctifies, no matter how sincerely it is believed, neither how long it has been cherished nor is it dependent in the numerical superiority that may believe that it is "truth." Jesus in fact prayed the Father that His disciples, then and now be sanctified by the truth. "Sanctify them through the truth, Thy word is truth." John 17:17.

In fact it is those who are seeking to perfect their characters by overcoming their sins who Satan aims his fiery darts at, skillfully choosing what to hit them with because their temptations may not be intemperance or to indulge self but to follow mistaken ideas that are so close to the truth yet when examined closely, contradict God's word on the matter. Notice:

"Those who are striving to be overcomers will be pursued by the temptations of the enemy. Satan will tempt them to corrupt the principles which all must maintain who will reach the high standard that God has set before them. *Satan rejoices when he can lead souls to follow mistaken ideas, until their names are blotted out of the book of life and recorded among the unjust.* We can overcome only in the way that Christ overcame--by

wholehearted obedience to every commandment of God. True religion is obedience to all the commandments of God.” – *This Day With God*, p. 322.

That following mistaken ideas is a very serious matter can only be seen in the fearful warning that Satan’s only objective is to keep us following these mistaken ideas *until our names are blotted out of the book of life and recorded among the unjust!* Of course time-setting is by no means the only kind of “mistaken ideas;” the list is long.

Thus, even if I have stated it repeatedly in the past, both in printed studies and verbally, during live Bible studies and sermons, I have come to the conclusion this side of the resurrection morning that this matter needs to be emphasized periodically. Why? Because in spite of repeated failures of their predictions presented with such detail that it appears authentic at first reading, time-setters and time-setting persistently keep appearing in different forms and in different places—but all with one common thread running through them—which perhaps some of them may not be aware till now. That is, by ignoring the clearest warnings and statements of E.G. White regarding time-setting while at the same using carefully chosen portions of her writings, most often taken out of context that purportedly sustains their pet theories, they are actually feeding her accusers with more “evidence” that “she contradicted herself,” and that she “was a plagiarist,” etc., etc.

Once more, let all students of the Biblical prophecy remember that God has *never* revealed the precise time of the following unfulfilled prophecies that take place after 1844, as follows:

- 1. when the latter rain will be poured out**
- 2. when Sunday Law, the Biblical end-time “abomination of desolation” or “abomination that maketh desolate” shall be finally enacted into law by the U. S. Congress**
- 3. the precise time when the *final* loud cry will start** (it begun with the proclamation of the righteousness of Christ back in 1888 in the messages given by Jones and Waggoner).
- 4. when earth’s probation will close**
- 5. when the seven last plagues will begin to be poured out.**
- 6. the duration of the seven last plagues till the special resurrection that occurs at the beginning of the seventh plague, and,**
- 7. the precise time when Christ shall break through the clouds—except for a very special group of saints; this will be revealed only to the 144,000 and those who come up in the special resurrection at the start of the seventh and last plaguc.**

Many sincere and zealous believers who quote extensively chosen portions of the Bible and the inspired writings of E.G. White, continue to ignore all the warnings that there are absolutely no more time prophecies after October 22, 1884—the end of the longest time prophecy of the whole Bible. They come up with different “time-lines,” which repeatedly fail. Some of the more deceptive ones are theories that would make it appear that there is a future “third application” of the 1260, 1290, and 1335 days (three-and-a-half year periods of time) as occurring *after* the enactment of the Sunday Law—the end-time “abomination of desolation,” etc. (We will address this particular deception and specific form of fanaticism in a future series).

Meantime, preparing to receive the promised latter rain of the Holy Spirit's power without measure, in most respects, is the same preparation involved in preparing for seven important events, namely:

- 1. receive the seal of the living God or the name of the Father in the forehead, the same as work of overcoming and sanctification**
- 2. pass the final sifting test of the Sunday law, and the persecution that follows**
- 3. meet the final deception of Spiritualism before the close of probation**
- 4. be part of those who will give the final loud cry in the final movement described as "the fourth angel" of Revelation 18**
- 5. close probation, whether individual, or earth's probation itself**
- 6. stand in the seven last plagues**
- 7. meet Jesus in peace when He comes in glory, whether by resurrection or translation.**

The late Elder Gordon Collier in his voluminous compilations and studies listed seven conditions (which I also came across in the course of my studies of the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy) that must first be satisfied in order for us to receive the latter rain. Having studied the subject on my own, however, I arrived at a different order,--being a victorious people appearing at the end, as a summary of all meeting all the other conditions. They are as follows:

- 1. An enlightened people**
- 2. A praying people**
- 3. A working people**
- 4. A temperate people**
- 5. A law-abiding people**
- 6. A loving people**
- 7. An overcoming, victorious people**

Let us consider each of these conditions based on the following references:

1. An Enlightened People

Enlighten is synonymous with illuminate, illumine; instruct. It means to supply with light; to shed the light of truth and knowledge upon; to free from ignorance, error, etc.; inform; to supply with spiritual light; to give insight to. It is *impossible* for anyone who is not knowledgeable, intellectually and spiritually, of the present, sealing truths for these last days, as revealed in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy, to receive the latter rain.

And no one can be enlightened or fully instructed on the testing truths for these last days and neglect the daily, diligent, focused, and progressive study of God's word. It is this great want among us individual members of the commandment-keeping remnant church, at this late hour of probation time, that renders us lukewarm--a spiritual condition so nauseating to the "faithful and true Witness" He says He "will spew us out of His mouth"---unless we speedily and thoroughly repent. Many, in self-confidence, think they know everything yet are not too sure about what the testing truths are, much less prepared to individually defend and clearly explain these to those who inquire what they are. Not a few are clinging to erroneous ideas and interpretations of the gospel, particularly the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation. Notice (emphasis mine):

“Men rest satisfied with the light already received from God’s word, and discourage any further investigation of the Scriptures. They become conservative, and seek to avoid discussion.

The fact that there is no controversy or agitation among God’ people, should not be regarded as evidence that they are holding fast to sound doctrine. There is reason to fear that they may not be clearly discriminating between truth and error. When no new questions are started by investigation of the Scriptures, when no difference of opinion arises which will set men to searching the Bible for themselves, to make sure that they have the truth, there will be many now, as in ancient times, who will hold to tradition, and worship they know not what.

I have been shown that many who profess to have a knowledge of present truth, know not what they believe. They do not understand the evidences of their faith. They have no just appreciation of the *work* for the present time. When the time of trial shall come [and it is drawing nearer each day], there are men now *preaching* to others, who will find, upon examining the positions they hold, that there are many things for which they can give no satisfactory reason. Until thus tested, they knew not their great ignorance.

And there are *many in the church* who take it for granted that they understand what they believe, but, until controversy arises, they do not know their own weakness. When separated from those of like faith, and compelled to stand singly and alone to explain their belief, they will be surprised to see how confused are their ideas of what they had accepted as truth [Why?] Certain it is that there has been among us a departure from the living God, and a turning to me, putting human wisdom in place of divine.

God will arouse His people; if other means fail, *heresies* will come in among them, separating the chaff from the wheat. The Lord calls upon all who believe His word to awake out of sleep [Rom 13: 11-14]. *Precious light has come, appropriate for this time. It is Bible truth, showing the perils that are right before us. This light should lead us to a diligent study of the Scriptures, and a most critical examination of the positions we hold.*

God would have all the bearings and positions of the truth thoroughly and perseveringly searched, *with prayer and fasting.* Believers are not to rest in suppositions and ill-defined ideas of what constitutes truth. Their faith must be firmly founded upon the word of God, *so that when the testing time shall come, and they are brought before councils to answer for their faith,* they may be able to give a reason for the hope that is in them, with meekness and fear [1 Pet. 3:15].

Agitate, agitate, agitate! The subjects which we present to the world must be to us a living reality. It is important that in defending the doctrines which we consider *fundamental articles of faith,* we should never allow ourselves to employ arguments that are not wholly sound. These may avail to silence an opposer, but they do not honor the truth. We should present sound arguments, that will not only silence our opponents, but will bear the closest and most searching scrutiny.” – *Counsels to Writers and Editors,* pp. 39, 40.

Notice the following quotes (all emphasis supplied):

(a) The role of the Scriptures

See 2 Pet. 1:21. “Some have neglected the Bible under the erroneous impression that the indwelling of the Holy Spirit was preferable to the study and guidance of the Scriptures. Such will be exposed to Satan’s snares and fatal delusions. The Holy Spirit and the Word are in perfect harmony. The Holy Spirit inspired the Scriptures and always

leads to the Scriptures. Everything in the religious world is to be tried by the Scriptures. 'To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.' (Isa. 8:20). *The claimed enlightenment of the Spirit within* is to be tested and tried by the Word of God [not the wisdom of man], which is the detector of pure wheat." – *That I May Know Him*, p. 195.

See John 5:39. "The admonition to 'search the Scriptures' was never more appropriate than at the present time." – *Ibid*, p. 194.

See Ps. 119: 130. "It is not enough to have an intellectual knowledge of truth. . . There must be an entrance of the Word into the heart. It must be set home by the power of the Holy Spirit. The will must be brought into harmony with its requirements. *Not only the intellect but the heart and conscience must concur in the acceptance of truth.* . . It is the knowledge which God's Word supplies, and which can be found nowhere else, that we need above every other. We want to know what to do in this our day to escape the snares of Satan and the win the crown of glory." – *Ibid*, p. 192.

"Every truly converted soul will be intensely desirous to bring others from the darkness of error into the marvelous light of the righteousness of Jesus Christ. The great outpouring of the Spirit of God which lightens the earth with its glory [Rev. 18:1] *will not come until we have an enlightened people, that know by experience what it means to be laborers together with God. When we have entire, wholehearted consecration to the service of Christ, God will recognize the fact by and outpouring of His Spirit without measure; but this will not be while the largest portion of the church are not laborers together with God.* God cannot pour out His Spirit when *selfishness and self-indulgence* are so manifest; when a spirit prevails, that, if put into words, would express that answer of Cain---'Am I my brother's keeper?.' – *My Life Today*, p. 59.

(b) The role of the Holy Spirit

See Eph. 1:17, 18. "For the mind renewed by the Holy Spirit, divine beauty and celestial light shine from the sacred page. That which is to the earthly mind a desolate wilderness, to the spiritual mind becomes a land of living streams.

The Holy Spirit alone can cause us to feel the importance of those things easy to be understood, or prevent us from wresting truths difficult of comprehension. . . God's holy, educating Spirit is in His Word. A light, a new and precious light, shines forth from every page. Truth is there revealed, and words and sentence are made bright and appropriate for the occasion, as the voice of God speaking to them.

We need to recognize the Holy Spirit as our enlightener. That Spirit loves to address the children [literal and spiritual], and discover to them the treasures and beauties of the Word. The promises spoken by our Great Teacher will captivate the senses and animate the soul (of the child) with a spiritual power that is divine. There will grow in the receptive mind a familiarity with divine things which will be as a barricade against the temptations of the enemy. . . The sparks of heavenly love will fall upon the hearts of the children as an inspiration." – *My Life Today*, p. 44.

(c) The role of the holy angels

See Exo. 23:20; Ps. 91: 10-12; Heb. 1: 1-14. "The glad message of Heb. 1: 14. The entire chapter is a wonderful encouragement for every tried and tempted soul [Heb. 1: 13, 14 quoted]. These messages are coming down along the line to our time, to them that shall be heirs of salvation. Angels actually come to our world. Nor are they always invisible. They sometimes veil their angelic appearance, and appearing as men, they converse with and enlighten human beings. . . While some are in the valley of indecision,

angels are uniting with true, wholehearted servants of Christ to help these needy souls.”- *My Life Today*, p. 304.

See Exo. 23:20; Ps. 91: 10-12: “All heaven is engaged in the work of preparing a people to stand in the day of the Lord’s preparation. The connection of heaven with earth seems very close. . . . The heavenly intelligences are waiting with almost impatient earnestness to make Him known to the human agent, that they may be *laborers* together with these heavenly angels in presenting Jesus---the Lord’s Redeemer, full of grace and truth. . . .” - *Ibid*, p. 307.

“It is the office of holy angels to *prepare the heart* so to comprehend God’s word that we shall be charmed with its beauty, admonished by its warnings, or animated and strengthened by its promises. We should make the psalmist’s petition our own, ‘Open Thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law’ [Ps. 119:18].” - *Great Controversy*, p. 599.

2. A Praying People

“God invites us to come to Him with our burden of guilt and our heart sorrows. Sin fills us with fear of God. When we have sinned we try to hide ourselves from Him. But whatever our sin, God bids us come unto Him through Jesus Christ. It is only by taking our sins to God that we can be freed from them. . . .” - *That I May Know Him*, p. 260

But this all must remember: “*One who turns his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be an abomination.*” Prov. 28:9, NKJV.

See Luke 11: 1-13: “We should pray *as earnestly* for the descent of the Holy Spirit as the disciples prayed on the day of Pentecost. If they needed it at that time, we need it more today. . . . Without the Spirit’s aid, our efforts to present divine truth will be in vain.” - *Review & Herald*, Aug. 25, 1896.

“Let us with contrite hearts, pray most earnestly that now, in the time of the latter rain, the showers of grace may fall upon us.” - *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 590. “But God must command the rain to fall. Therefore we should not be remiss in supplication.”- *Ibid*, p. 590.

3. A Working Church

The word “glory” in Revelation 18: 1 is the untranslated Greek *doxa*, meaning, “as very apparent in very wide application, literally or figuratively, objectively of subjectively; dignity, honor, praise, worship.” - *Strong’s Greek Dictionary*.

“Every truly converted soul will be intensely desirous to bring others from the darkness of error into the marvelous light of the righteousness of Jesus Christ. *The great outpouring of the Spirit of God, which lightens the whole earth with His glory, will not come until we have an enlightened people, who know what it means to be laborers together with God.* When we have an *entire, whole-hearted consecration* to the service of Christ, God will recognize the fact by an *outpouring of His Spirit without measure; but this will not be while the largest portion of the church are not laborers together with God.*”- *My Life Today*, p. 59; CS 253; Ev. 699.

“*When the churches become living, working churches*, the Holy Spirit will be given in answer to their sincere request. Then the truth of God’s word will be regarded with

new interest. . . . They will then plead with soul with an earnestness that cannot be repulsed. *Then the windows of heaven will be open for the showers of the latter rain.*” – *Review & Herald*, Feb. 25, 1890.

“*When the reproach of indolence and slothfulness shall have been wiped away from the church*, the Spirit of the Lord will be graciously manifested. Divine power will be revealed. The church will see the providential working of the Lord of hosts. The light of truth will shine forth in clear, strong rays, and as in the time of the apostles, many souls will turn from error to truth. The earth will be lightened with the glory of the Lord.” – *Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 46.

These revelations can be both encouraging and discouraging to some, depending on how urgent you want the work to be finished. First, this work of being “laborers together with God” is four-fold, namely,

(1) soul-winning, i.e., bringing new souls into the fold of the remnant church through evangelistic efforts both through individual and church-sponsored ministries

(2) bringing back backsliders, disfellowshipped, and discouraged members.

(3) nurturing the young in the faith, particularly those newly baptized, in increasing knowledge of the doctrines of the church, and in practical Christian work of visiting the sick, widows, and orphans and supporting the various church ministries.

(4) revival and reformation of church members who have fallen into lukewarmness and worldliness with the ultimate goal of preparing more candidates to receive the seal of the living God and the promised latter rain—by daily overcoming their sins.

It is *encouraging* in that our merciful God is still patiently waiting for the following conditions to be met before He pours out the latter rain, namely: (1) the largest portion of the church has to become co-laborers with Him in the four different areas mentioned above (2) When the churches in general become living, working churches, meaning, they have been spiritually dead and (3) when the reproach of indolence and slothfulness shall have been wiped away from the church.

On the other hand it can be *discouraging* to a certain extent for those who have been quietly laboring all these years, hoping to bring about these conditions but hardly see any indications that “the largest portion of the church,” if it is the corporate church here is meant, are laboring together with God in these four areas. In fact, it appears that the church-at-large is becoming even more lukewarm! How does this square away with her statement that: “the whole church will never be revived”? (see *Selected Messages*, vol. 1, p. 122). Their question and mine as well is: “How long, O Lord, will this go on?” But God has promised that though “the church will appear to fall, it will not”!

4. A Temperate People

Intemperance prevails everywhere in all areas of life from diet, work, entertainment choices, clothing, etc. Apostle Paul explained that in striving for the crown that is eternal life, temperance is central to success. He said:

“Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is *temperate* in all things. Now they do it to obtain perishable crown, but we do for an imperishable crown. Therefore

I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I *discipline my body and bring it to subjection*, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.” 1 Cor. 9:24-27, NKJV.

Temperance comes from the Greek *egkrateia*, “self-control;” *egkrateuomai*, “to exercise self-control;” *egkrates*, “self-controlled;” and *sophron*, “prudent” or self-controlled.” Self-control is one of the important Christian graces (Gal. 5:23| 2 Pet. 1:6; etc). It is essential to victory in the Christian race [for eternal life], as it is in an athletic contest (1 Cor. 9:25.).

Sanctification, or the process of being made holy and perfect, can only be achieved if temperance is practiced in the daily life, in all things, and in all occasions and situations. Daniel, the Jewish statesman and prophet at the court of Nebuchadnezzar during the Babylonian captivity, who was of the royal family (Dan. 1:3), thus, of the tribe of Judah, was one such shining example (together with his three Hebrew friends). Brought into the heathen courts of Nebuchadnezzar, he could have yielded to the overwhelming flood of temptations that surrounded him. “But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king’s delicacies, not with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.” Dan. 1:8, NKJV.

“The life of Daniel is an inspired illustration of what constitutes a sanctified character. It presents a lesson for all, and especially for the young. A strict compliance with the requirements of God is beneficial to the health of body and mind. In order to reach *the highest standard of moral and intellectual attainments*, it is necessary to seek wisdom and strength from God and *to observe strict temperance* in all the habits of life. *In the experience of Daniel and his companions we have an instance of triumph of principle over temptation to indulge the appetite*. It shows us that through religious principle young men may triumph over the lusts of the flesh, and remain true to God’s requirements, even though it cost them a great sacrifice.

Daniel was a devoted servant of the Most High. His long life was filled with noble deeds of service to his Master. *His purity of character and unwavering fidelity are equaled only by his humility of heart and his contrition before God. We repeat, the life of is an inspired illustration of true sanctification.*” – *Sanctified Life*, 39.

I can think of no higher distinction than to be described as a person whose “purity of character and unwavering fidelity are equaled only by his humility of heart and contrition before God”—such as what Daniel’s long life of true sanctification exemplified and illustrated! In Daniel and his friends’ experience we have an instance of triumph of principle over the temptation to *indulge* the appetite—appetite meaning, desire, or lust for *any thing*--not limited merely to food, drink, fashion, entertainment, or sexual desire, etc. Even the excessive indulgence of things that are good in themselves is intemperance—such overachieving in “physical fitness” to the neglect of other responsibilities, particularly the spiritual.

This is the same goal and standard set before all regardless of time, circumstance, or station in life. The argument may be made, however, that there are very special classes of people who may not be able to fully understand and achieve all that may be accomplished by “normal” persons, such as those whose cognitive capacities have been severely damaged or compromised on account of disease or any number of mishaps or accidents. While the days of the greatest miracles are yet to be manifested during the outpouring of the coming latter rain, including genuine amazing healings, such precious

souls, are not to be subjected to unrealistic expectations and tests. They are to be loved and committed to God's amazing grace and omniscient wisdom.

God's servant says:

"Wherever they may be, those who are truly sanctified will elevate the moral standard by preserving correct physical habits and, like Daniel, presenting to others an example of temperance and self-denial. . . With what care should Christians regulate their habits, that they may preserve the full vigor of every faculty to give to the service of Christ."- *My Life Today*, 254.

"He who cherishes the light which God has given upon health reform has an important aid in the work of becoming sanctified through the truth and fitted for immortality." - *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, pp. 59, 60.

"There are few who realize as they should how much their habits of diet have to do with their health, their character, and their usefulness in this world, and their eternal destiny." - *Patriarchs & Prophets*, p. 599.

"It is *impossible* for those who indulge appetite to attain to Christian perfection." - *Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 400.

"He who remains in sinful ignorance of the laws of life and health, or who willfully violate these laws, sins against God." - *Counsels to Teachers & Parents*, p. 295.

"Why do some of our *ministering brethren* manifest so little interest in health reform? . . . No man should be set apart as teacher of the people while his own teaching or example contradicts the testimony God has given His servants to bear in regard to *diet*, for this will bring confusion. *His disregard of health reform unfits him to stand as God's messenger.*" - *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 378.

"Let not any of our *ministers set an evil example* in the eating of flesh meat." - *Counsels on Diets and Foods*, p. p. 399.

"Among those who are waiting for the coming of the Lord, meat eating will eventually be done away; flesh will cease to form a part of their diet."- *Ibid*, pp. 380, 381.

"Many who are now half-converted on the question of meat eating will go from God's people to walk no more with them."- *Ibid*, p. 382; CH 575; RH May 27, 1902.

5. A Law-abiding People

While some may narrow this specification to a "Sabbath-keeping people," I would expand it instead to the whole law, for, as the apostle says, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in *one point*, he is guilty of all." James 2: 10. The Jews, God's chosen people—up to the end of the 70-week prophecy of Daniel 9: 24-27---were the only Sabbath-keepers of their time and yet they were the very ones who had the Lord of the Sabbath crucified!

The gospel prophet was shown the crucial work of Sabbath reform in the last days as central to receiving the seal of the living God. This work and message which is part of the Third angel's message of Rev. 14: 9 sees the professed people of God on the last days as "keeping the Sabbath," and yet "*polluting*" it. The correct day is kept physically and

yet it is polluted by the *worldly*, self-pleasing thoughts, words, and deeds indulged in by the Sabbath-keepers on this holy day. See Isaiah 58: 12-14; cf. Eze. 20: 12, 20.

John was shown who the true remnant church of the last days is. He described her as “the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ,” and then introduces them at the end of the three angel’s messages with the following words: “Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.” Rev. 12: 17; 14:12, KJV.

Indeed, the Seventh-day Baptists keep the seventh-day Sabbath but reject the closing work of Christ as High Priest in the investigative judgment begun since October 22, 1844 in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary. The basis of this divine court proceeding is the whole Ten Commandments, not merely the fourth commandment. The Decalogue, as originally written by the finger of God on two tables of stone, was kept inside the ark of the testimony on the top of which was the mercy seat, which was located in the most holy place of the sanctuary. Here, the high priest entered only once a year, at the end of the year, to perform the closing work of “cleansing the sanctuary” during the day of Atonement. This was the type of the work that Christ, our High Priest, entered into at the end of the 2300 day/year prophecy of Daniel 8:14—the antitypical day of Atonement.

How important then that all who are earnestly seeking that necessary preparation to receive the latter rain, thus preparing for the rest of the seven closing events cited at the top of page 66 of this study, leading up to the glorious second coming of Christ, understand as much as they can of the magnified, spiritual meaning of all ten commandments so that they can obey them “with all their heart, with all their mind, and with all their soul, and with all their strength.” Mark 12: 28-31; Luke 10: 25-28.

Note: You may ask for the separate handout entitled “The Magnified Meaning of the Spirituality of the Law.”

6. A Loving People

The love described here is the one defined in 1 Corinthians 13, one that can only come from a heart that is being transformed by the grace of God in Christ, and a mind that is being renewed by the work of the Holy Spirit with person’s willing consent and participation. There is definitely hard work to done here—but God gives the grace and power to accomplish all these, as with all the requirements of the plan of salvation. Our part is to appropriate these empowerments and put all our heart, mind, soul, and strength into the work.

“Let Christians *put away* all dissension, and *give* themselves to God for the saving of the lost. Let them ask in faith for the promised blessing, and it will come. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the days of the apostles was the ‘former rain,’ and glorious was the result. But the latter rain will be more abundant.” –*Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 21.

“The Spirit can *never* be poured out while variance and bitterness toward one another are cherished by the members of the church. *Envy, jealousy, evil-surmising, and evil-speaking are of Satan* and they effectually bar the way against the Holy Spirit’s working.” –*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 42.

So many of God's people got caught up with the excitement of the just-concluded U.S. presidential election, not realizing they were imbibing and passing on, particularly by emails, what were actually evil-surmising and evil-speaking in the *smear campaigns* against each other—especially against now president Barack Obama, saying that he is “a Muslim,” “the antichrist,” etc. All such accusations *on both aisles* of the political divide have been faithfully recorded in the books of heaven that all those involved will have to meet in their judgment. I received all kinds of such emails during that campaign coming from Christian friends, read some and promptly deleted them. How many made or passed on accusations without first verifying these information *from the persons concerned*, whether such information were true and accurate? How will they ask forgiveness from them when, later, they find that such were lies and misinformation?

But how are genuine Christians to be known, especially in times like these? Ask John the Beloved. He will tell you:

“In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest. Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother. For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. . . . He who does not love his brother abides in death. Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. . . . My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. . . .” 1 John 3: 10, 11, 14-16.

“If someone says, I love God, and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.” 1 John. 4: 20, 21, NKJV.

7. An Overcoming, victorious People

Both the Scriptures and the “the testimony of Jesus in the spirit of prophecy” (Rev. 19:10) in the remnant church assure all that it is not only possible but the very purpose and plan of the gospel that every fully dedicated and consecrated Christian shall be so filled with the Holy Spirit that he can progressively overcome sin during his lifetime and end as perfect overcomer in Christ before his death! The beloved disciple says:

“Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.” 1 John 3: 9. *“For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.”* Verse 3. *“Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?”* Verse 3; 4: 5.

Through the gospel prophet God proclaimed: “Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me.” Isa. 27:5, KJV.

In Christ there is Strength

“The enemy cannot overcome the *humble* learner of Christ, *the one who walks prayerfully before the Lord*. Christ interposes Himself as a shelter, a retreat, from the assaults of the wicked one. The promise is given, ‘When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.’

Satan was permitted to tempt the too-confident Peter, as he had been permitted to tempt Job; but when that work was done he had to retire. Had Satan been allowed to have his way, there would have been no hope for Peter. He would have made complete shipwreck of faith. *But the enemy does not go one hairbreadth beyond his appointed sphere.* There is no power in the whole Satanic force that can disable a soul that trusts, in simple confidence, in the wisdom that comes from God.

Christ is our tower of strength, and Satan can have no power over *the soul that walks with God in humility of mind. . . . In Christ there is perfect and complete help for every tempted soul.* Dangers beset every path, but the whole universe of heaven is standing on guard, that none may be tempted above that which he is able to bear. Some have strong traits of character, that will need to be constantly repressed. If kept under the control of the Spirit of God, these traits will be a blessing; but if not, they will prove a curse. . . . If we will give ourselves unselfishly to the work, never swerving in the least from principle, the Lord will throw about us the everlasting arms, and will prove a mighty Helper. If we look to Jesus as the One whom we may trust, He will never fail us in *any emergency.*" –*My Life Today*, p. 316.

Through Christ There is Victory

"But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. 15:57, NKJV.

"Christ has power from His Father to give His divine grace and strength to man, making it possible for him through His name *to overcome. . . .*

All are personally exposed to the temptations that Christ overcame, but strength is provided for them in the powerful name of the great Conqueror. *And all must, for themselves, individually overcome.*

He knows every trial and sorrow of childhood and youth. He was once just your age. The temptations and trials which come to you also came to Him. The sorrows which come to you came to Him. *But He was never overcome by temptation.* His life held nothing that was not pure and noble. He is your Helper, your Redeemer.

His heart of divine love and sympathy is drawn out most of all for the one who is *most hopelessly entangled* in the snare of the enemy. With His own blood He has signed the emancipation papers of the [human] race.

Jesus does not desire those who have been purchased at such a cost to become the sport of the enemy's temptations. *He does not desire us to be overcome and perish. He who curbed the lions in their den and walked with His faithful witnesses amid the fiery flames is just as ready to work in our behalf, to subdue every evil in our nature.* Today He is standing at the altar of mercy, presenting before God the prayers of those who desire His help. He turns no weeping, contrite away. . . . The souls that turn to Him for refuge, Jesus lifts above the accusing and the strife of tongues. No man or evil angel can impeach these souls. *Christ unites them to His own divine-human nature.*" –*Ibid*, p. 317.

The Will is the Deciding Power

"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." Rom. 12:2, NKJV.

"There is nothing that can keep you away from God but a *rebellious* will. The will is the governing power in the nature of man. If the will is set right, all the rest of the being will come under its sway. The will is not the taste or the inclination, but it is the *choice*,

the deciding power, the kingly power, which works in the children of men unto obedience to God or disobedience.

You will be in constant peril until you understand the true force of the will [choice]. You may believe and promise all things, but your promises and your faith are of no account until you put your will on the right side [of righteousness]. If you will fight the fight of faith with your will power, there is no doubt that you will conquer.

Your part is to put your will on the side of Christ. When you yield your will to His, he immediately takes possession of you, and works in you to will and to do His good pleasure. Your nature is brought under the control of the His Spirit. *Even your thoughts are subject to Him.*

If you cannot control your impulses, your emotions, as you may desire, you can control the will, and thus and entire change will be wrought in your life. When you yield up your will to Christ, your life is hid with Christ in God. It is allied with the power which is above all principalities and powers. You have a strength from God that holds you fast to His strength; and a new life, even the life of faith, is possible to you.

You can never be successful in elevating yourself, unless your will is on the side of Christ, *cooperating* with the Spirit of God. Do not feel that you cannot; but say, *'I can, I will.'* And God has pledged His Holy Spirit to help *in every decided effort.*" – *Ibid*, p. 318.

Remember that We are under God's Searching Eye

See Eph. 4: 22-24. "Provision has been made whereby every soul that is struggling under sinful practices may be made free from sin. **How?**

[1] Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.' (John 1:29).

[2] The Christian is not to retain his sinful habits and cherish his defects of character, but he is to *be renewed in the spirit of his mind* after the divine similitude.

[3] Whatever may be the nature of your defects, the Spirit of the Lord will enable you to discern them, and grace will be given you whereby that may be overcome. Through merits of the blood of Christ you may be a conqueror--yes, more than a conqueror. . . .

[4] Ask the Lord to reveal to you yourself; place your life under His searching eye, and when He lays hold of upon your case you will see that you have made grievous mistakes, and what you supposed was of little importance was offensive in the sight of Heaven. *You will see that there is a decided need of thorough transformation of character.* You will realize that you must put away the evil of your doings, and cooperate with God and heavenly angels who are sent to minister unto those who shall be heirs of salvation. . . .

[5] *Self must die.* Every practice, every habit, that has a harmful tendency, however innocent it may be regarded by the world, must be battled with until overcome, that the human agent may perfect a character after the divine Pattern.

[6] The crooked ways, the perverse doings of those around us, are not to dim the luster of our piety or to lead us to conform our habits to, and assimilate our customs and practices with, the world's.

[7] Then let the prayer go to God, 'Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.' Ps. 139: 23, 24." – *That I May Know Him*, p. 237.

It is only because we as a people have failed to emphasize the true awesome nature and the current work of Christ in the most holy place, as the Judge of all the earth during the most solemn time of earth's history that many have become presumptuous, and recklessly careless over their own soul's salvation!

To be continued next month.